NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

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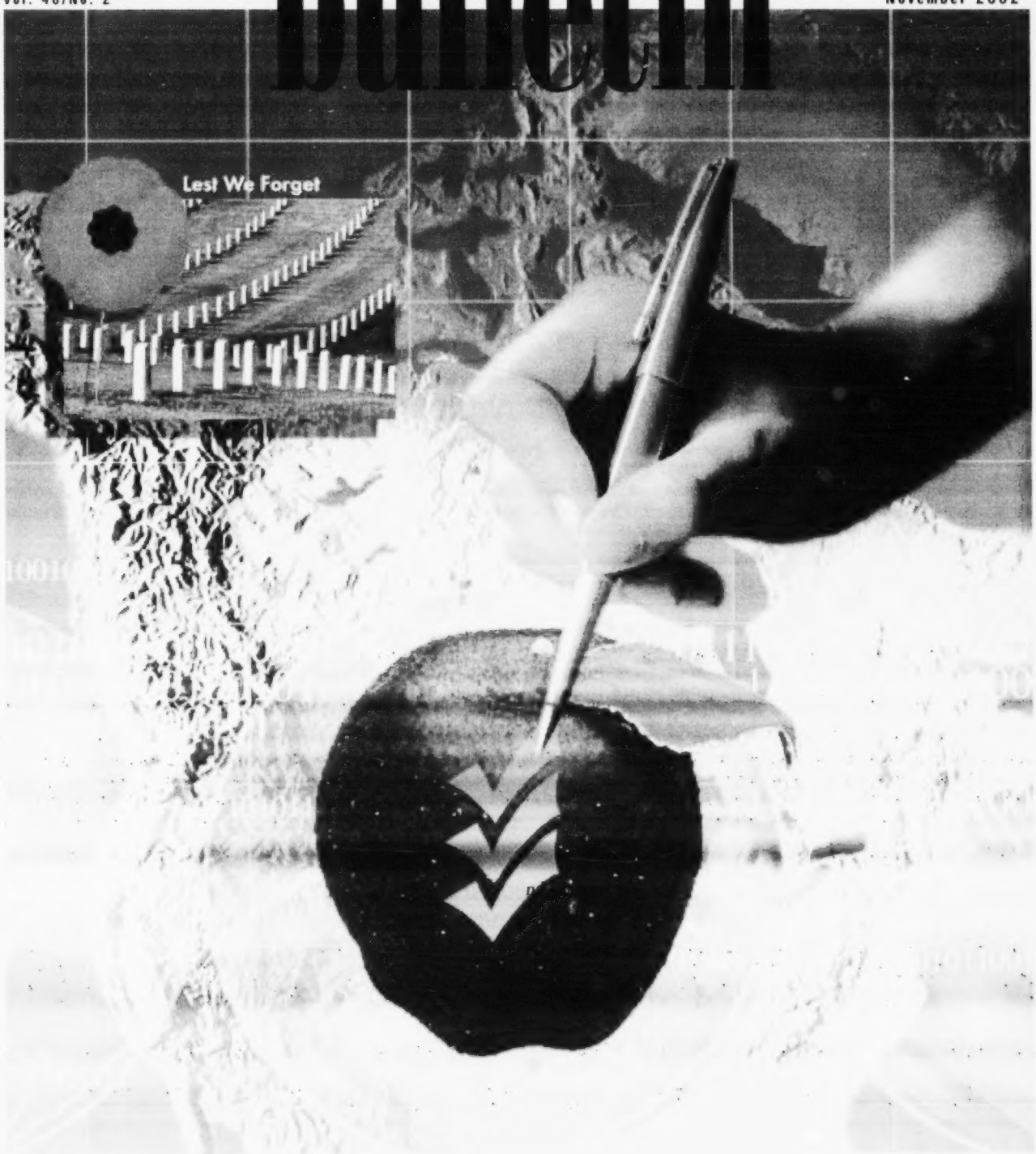

Many Places, Many Faces, One Spirit

BY LESLEY-ANN BROWNE

While selecting "Many Places, Many Faces, One Spirit" as the theme for Education Week 2003, the Education Week Committee had evaluated and considered the work being carried out by the Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening Our Place in Canada.

During the latter part of the summer, the President of the NLTA was approached by the Chairperson of the Royal Commission to request our involvement into the public forums taking place this year and to possibly tie the subject of the Commission with the theme of Education Week. This information was forwarded to the Education Week Committee for their consideration when selecting the theme.

After a great deal of deliberation and discussion around the work of the Commission it was decided to select a theme that celebrated our many roles in society on the local, provincial, national and international levels instead of only our place in Canada. The committee discussed recent world events and how we have united against acts of terrorism and violence, as well as have united to celebrate acts of heroism and kindness. Events such as a family rejoicing the birth of a child, a school celebrating the great work of its teachers and students, or a community uniting in the search for a lost child, are similar the world over.

The world is made up of many places, and many faces, but also encompasses a strength and courage that we call "spirit". Thus the reason for the selection of the theme, "Many Places, Many Faces, One Spirit." The theme allows for some thought and reflection about our place in our schools, communities, provinces, and the place that we have in a much broader spectrum within Canada and the rest of the world.

The NLTA 2003 Education Week Committee has been meeting since early September to select the theme for Education Week and prepare resource materials for teachers for use during the week-long activities. The Committee consists of Anne Perry, Chairperson, and members Walter Hammond, Christine Greene, Shelley Stead, Marina Foley, Craig White, Jackie Bennett, Mary Brennan, as well as staff from the Communications Division of the NLTA.

The committee feels that it is important to ensure that teachers within our schools have resources that will be both helpful and useful in planning a week of fun and educational activities where we can celebrate the good things that are happening in education in our province. In the next few weeks the location for the Opening Ceremonies will be announced as will the Honorary Chairperson. Both the Honorary Chairperson and the location of the Opening Ceremonies must be approved by the Provincial Executive Council of the NLTA and will be announced after they meet in November.

If teachers have any suggestions or resources that you feel should be included in the Resource Book or for Education Week in general, please forward them to me as soon as possible. As always, your ideas and opinions are welcome.

THE bulletin

Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor

Michelle Lamarche
Editorial Assistant

Linda Babstock, John Bishop, Elliott Green, Louise King
Design • Printing • Distribution

Linda Farrell
Online Services

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Tel: 709-726-3223; 1-800-563-3599
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582
e-mail: labrowne@nlta.nf.ca
Internet Address: www.nlta.nf.ca

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Advertising inquiries should be directed to: Michelle Lamarche, Ext. 227
mlamarche@nlta.nf.ca

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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

TREPASSEY

Literacy program rewards students

During the 2001-02 school year, the students of Holy Redeemer Elementary School in Trepassey participated in the Read to Ride Literacy Program. The goal of this program is to promote reading as an enjoyable and rewarding activity with one of the rewards being a chance to win a refurbished bicycle and helmet.

The students of Holy Redeemer were encouraged to read as many books as possible during the program which began in late November and ran until early May. Primary students were asked to keep a reading log which recorded the titles and authors of the books they had read, while elementary students kept track of their progress by recording the number of pages they had read. Progress thermometers were used so that the students could actually see the progress the entire student body had achieved over the course of the school year.

A student at Holy Redeemer Elementary School tries out her new bicycle.

Prizes were awarded at the end of each month, within each grade level, to the students who had shown the most interest. In May, the students gathered for an assembly with special guests Mr. David d'Entremont who established the program in 1995, and Mr. John Holwell, both from the "Read to Ride Literacy Program", and Mr. Wayne Hanlon of Hanlon's Foodland in Trepassey. Mr. d'Entremont presented seven lucky students with bicycles while Mr. Hanlon presented bicycle helmets to each of the winners. There were also a number of gift certificates from Granny Bates Bookstore presented to students for different categories including the Most Improved Reader and the Most Engaged (Interested) Reader. The students had also been asked to write a short essay on either "Why I Like to Read" or "How the Read to Ride Program Has Improved My Reading". The winners of these essay contests were also given gift certificates. Some of the comments from their essays included: "The books I read give me good ideas for stories and paragraphs I write at school."; "When I read a good book I can sometimes picture in my mind the events that are happening."; "Read to Ride has even caused my mom to become more interested in reading."; and "I love this program and I hope we have it next year."

The students and teachers at Holy Redeemer Elementary feel that this program was very successful and they look forward to participating in the program for many years to come.

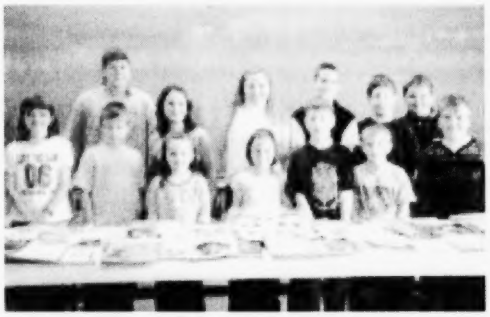
ST. BRENDAN'S

Students celebrate sweet success

In September, primary and elementary students at St. Gabriel's All Grade School in St. Brendan's, Bonavista Bay, along with their parents and teachers celebrated being selected secondary regional winners in the Mr. Christie Smart Cookie Program. The students were encouraged to read and record as many books as possible during a four-week period last winter. St. Gabriel's students read approximately 2,400 books – everything from easy readers to full length novels. The goal of the reading program is "to promote children's literacy in Canada and to recognize and reward top participating schools. It enhances and promotes children's love of reading and encourages parents and teachers to get involved to encourage reading in and out of the classroom," said a spokesperson for the Mr. Christie Smart Cookie Program.

For their efforts the students at St. Gabriel's received $1,000 in Random House of Canada books for their library. "We were able to choose a selection of high quality books that we otherwise could not have afforded", said teacher Joan Croke. "Our students were totally committed to the program and there was an obvious

increase in reading interest. Congratulations to all participants. With such a great selection of new books I feel certain the students will want to participate in the program again this year."



Students from St. Gabriel'S All Grade: Front row (l-r): Jennifer Ryan, Jordan Walsh, Chantelle Byrne, Megan Reardon, Jamie Byrne, Lucas Furlong, Johnathon Aylward. Back row (l-r): Hilary Walsh, Cassandra Ryan, Brittney Aylward, Peter O'Rielly, Justin Ryan, Randy Aylward.

ST. GEORGE'S

Students enjoy educational tour of cargo vessel

This past April, the Grade 5 class at Our Lady of Mercy Elementary School in St. George's were treated to a very special tour. Spliethoff, the largest international shipping company based in Holland, extended an invitation for students to tour the vessel m/v Stadiongracht. The tour was arranged locally by Bruce Partridge, manager of Montship Inc., agents for Spliethoff in Stephenville. The students were accompanied on the tour by their teacher, Mark Bennett, and by the school counsellor, Chris Cooper.

The Stadiongracht is one of ten new general cargo carriers which are chartered to carry newsprint from the Abitibi-Consolidated mill in Stephenville. Built in 2000 in Poland, the 21,400 metric ton vessel has a capacity of 855,000 cubic feet of cargo and is capable of traveling in excess of 20 knots.

Upon arriving at the ship, the students were met by Mr. Partridge from Montship, Spliethoff Port Captain Marinus Verheul and Captain Daniels of the m/v Stadiongracht. They were taken first on a tour of the cargo holds. "What amazed the students was the vastness of the cargo area," said Chris Cooper. "As large as a football field, they realized that their whole school could fit in the hold, with room left over for a playground." Since the ship was also in the process of being loaded, although not while the students were in the hold, they were able to observe how rolls of newsprint are stowed for the long ocean voyage and how large a 900 kg roll of newsprint really is.

After visiting the hold, the students traveled up to the ship's bridge. Students Megan Curnew and Jessica White expressed their amazement at the number of stairs leading to the bridge with no elevator to make it easier. While on the bridge, students were shown all of the modern technology which enables a vessel such as the Stadiongracht to operate. Captain Verheul and Captain Daniels demonstrated the function of the radar, the satellite controlled navigation system and the full array of communication devices, such as VHF radio, SATCOM communications, e-mail and the Satellite fax machines. For students Lance Doucette, Evan Long, Alora Blanchard, Caitlin Penton, Cynthia Long and Arielle Alexander, this was definitely the highlight of the tour. They learned that the Stadiongracht can have its course programmed into the computer, allowing a trip across the Atlantic by automatic pilot.

After leaving the bridge the students went deep into the ship to see the massive engines. Nearly two stories high, and a long as a house, the engines are the heart of the ship. Also in the engine room area they observed the ship's desalination system which allows it to convert up to 30,000 litres of salt water to fresh water every day. The ship's generators were running during their visit, which let them know just how noisy this part of the ship was. Captain Verheul explained how the ship's ballast tanks were controlled, preventing the Stadiongracht from rolling over while at sea. Students Kelsie Snook and Dean Young decided that the engine room was the most exciting place to visit.

Captain Daniels provides students at Our Lady of Mercy Elementary with a demonstration of how the bridge of the Stadiongracht operates.

Before returning to the bridge the students also visited the crew's quarters. Dustin Warr was excited to see that the ship had a small gym for crew members to work out in during long voyages. Beth White had a chance to meet the ship's cook and observe how so much food could be prepared by one man. Because the ship's officers are Dutch and the crew Philippino, the

cook had to prepare every meal for two different cultures. The students also visited the ship's storeroom, allowing them to see the amount of food which a ship this large needs on hand for long voyages.

At the end of the tour the students returned to the bridge where the Captain arranged for snacks and soft drinks for everyone. Many questions were asked by the students about every detail of the ship's operation.

Upon returning to school, the students each wrote thank-you letters to their hosts, expressing their appreciation for such a great tour on a modern ocean-going freighter. The letters were hand delivered to the Captain before the ship sailed on Sunday.

ST. JOHN'S

NLTA Appointment Notice

Marie Wall

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Marie Wall to the position of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Coordinator. Marie has been working as an EAP Coordinator with the NLTA over the past two years, having replaced Claudette Coombs during the 2000-01 school year and Kathy Burford since the 2001-02 school year.

Marie holds a Master of Arts Degree in Counselling Psychology from the University of British Columbia along with a Diploma of Education (Guidance Studies) from U.B.C. and a B.Sc. (Psychology) from Memorial University. Marie also holds certificates in energy healing and acupressure. She utilizes a wholistic approach in her work with individuals and groups. She has extensive experience working with teachers, promoting health and well-being for the individual teacher and the staff group as a whole.

Prior to joining the NLTA, Marie worked as a therapist in Vancouver, Corner Brook and St. John's in the areas of individual and marriage counselling as well as group process facilitation.

Marie is currently an Executive member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Employee Assistance Program Association (NLEAPA).

Marie was born and raised in Corner Brook. She presently resides in St. John's.

Kathy Burford

NLTA Retirement Notice

Kathy Burford retired in August 2002 following an eleven-year career as an Employee Assistance Program Coordinator with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. Kathy has been on a leave of absence since the 2000-01 school year when she took up a new position as Director of EAP Services for the State of Vermont. She is currently working with Chittenden Corporation in New England in the area of Human Resource Development and Training. Kathy is also pursuing Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership.

Kathy became the first Coordinator of the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers with its inception in 1989, and was instrumental in initiating the many counselling services now offered to members of the Association.

The Association would like to thank Kathy for her exemplary work with the teachers of Newfoundland and Labrador and wish her all the best in her retirement.

Summer Institute 2002: Stepping into History

From July 7 to 14, 2002, forty elementary and middle grade school teachers and six facilitators participated in Summer Institute 2002, "Stepping into History". Located at Memorial University in St. John's, this institute provided hands-on training in the use of programs and activities that integrate history education into classroom plans. These seven days of professional development provided an opportunity for teachers of Canadian history to learn about engaging teaching strategies, effective learning resources, and interesting developments in our knowledge of Canada.

Teachers at Summer Institute 2002 visit the Colony of Avalon in Ferryland.

Participants benefited from the rich historical setting of Newfoundland, and a first-hand look at Historica's National Heritage Fair program running in tandem with the institute. Teachers acquired teaching strategies such as "storytelling", through Aboriginal Creation Stories and "stepping into the picture", to create greater interest for students in learning about Canada and Canadians.

Teachers gained knowledge of Canadian history and learned how to incorporate this knowledge into their teaching with "Military Days" led by David Facey-Crowthers, historian and professor at Memorial. The

making of a "Heritage Minute" with Clar Doyle and Rosemary Webb incorporated history into active learning.

A panel of historians discussed the question, "What and whose history should we teach?" and teachers were urged to work together with universities and historical societies to get the teaching of history included in our curricula.

Teachers also engaged in hands-on/minds-on active learning approaches by completing student activities at the Newfoundland Museum and a visit to the Colony of Avalon in Ferryland. Participants found time to relax after sessions at the military pub and museum "The Crow's Nest", and also had an opportunity to tour St. John's City Hall and have lunch with Mayor Andy Wells.

A full detail of the institute can be found at www.histori.ca/ezines/default.do?section=SummerInstituteE. A similar history institute will be held in Ontario and Montreal in July 2003.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

CRTs show great improvements in reading and writing skills

Recent announcements by the Provincial Government of results of the Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRTs) show tremendous improvements in reading and writing skills among primary students. The CRTs were conducted among Grade 3 students in June 2002.

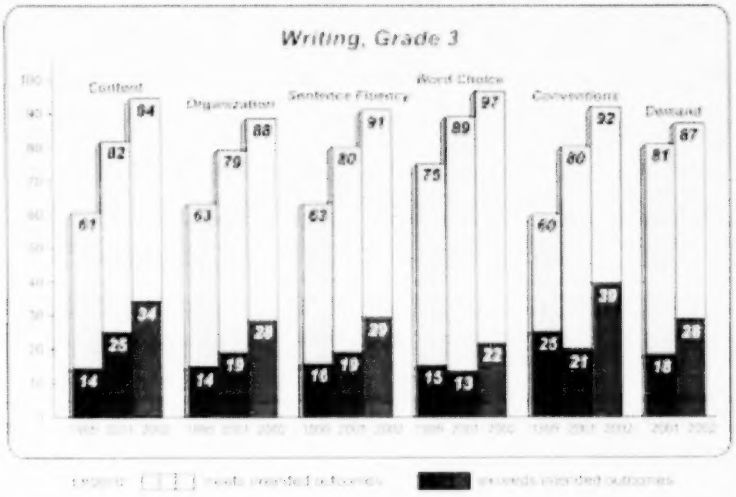
Compared to earlier reading and writing test results, the recent tests show there has been a significant increase in the number of Grade 3 students across the province who are able to read and understand stories, books, and other reading materials at the required level for Grade 4. This year, results showed that 79% of the students were reading at the required level as compared to 63% just last year.

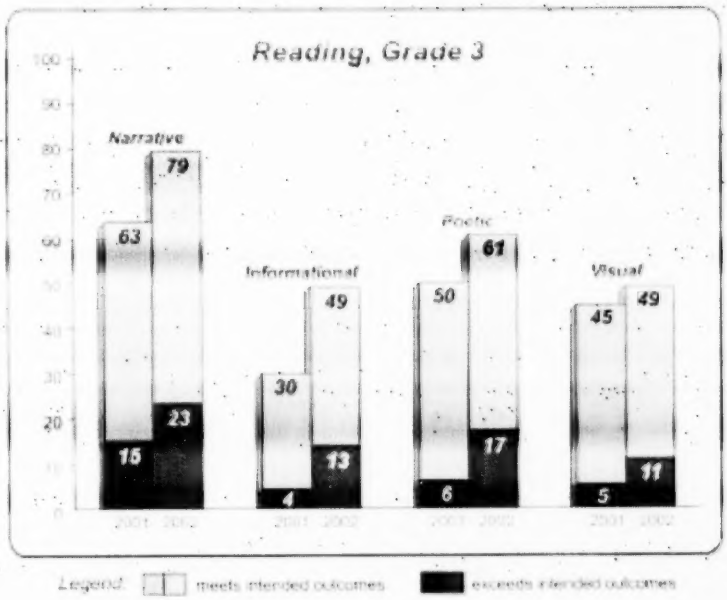
There has also been a significant increase in the number of children who are writing at a level that exceeds what is required for Grade 4. Over one-third of our students are entering elementary school with exemplary writing skills and approximately 90% are writing at the required level.

"Our 1995 results told us we needed to take action to improve the reading and writing skills of our primary students," stated Education Minister Judy Foote. "Our teachers, principals, district and departmental staff took on the challenge to improve language arts performance with a range of significant initiatives.

Our teachers and schools responded with overwhelming enthusiasm for the new literacy focus. These gains in reading and writing levels are a result of the hard work of our primary teachers, the support of our parents and the commitment of our young students," said Minister Foote. "We are building a culture of literacy in our schools and communities."

CRTs are tests that are specifically matched to the curriculum taught in the province's schools. They are developed, validated and marked by teams of primary teachers. All students in Grade 3, including students receiving special supports, complete these tests. Previously the primary tests were administered every three years. Last year, as part of a strategy to closely monitor its literacy initiatives, the Department of Education began testing annually.

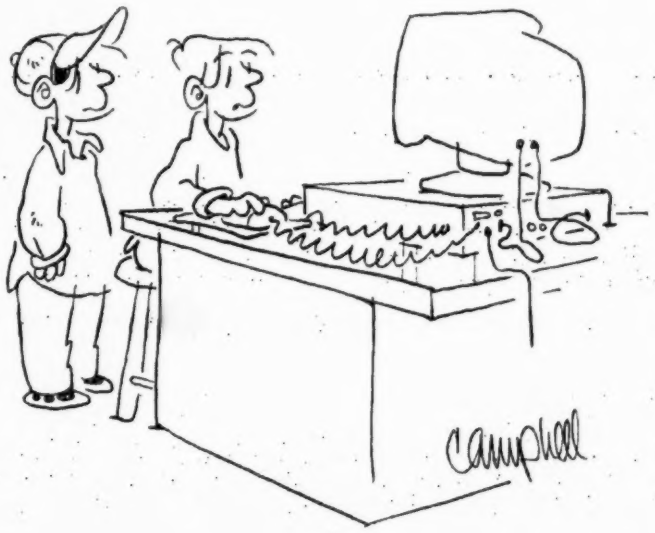




NLTA Mathematics League enters 16th season

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Senior Mathematics League, which began in 1987, is entering its 16th season in 2002-03. The League is supported by the NLTA (through its Math/Science Special Interest Council), the Department of Education, and the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Memorial University. It began as a competition amongst the high schools in the St. John's area and has since grown into a province-wide competition with many schools competing in local leagues in districts all across the province. There have even been leagues outside Newfoundland and Labrador, using our games.

The web-based version, which became available in the spring of 2001, allows any team/student(s) who cannot get to a site-based game the opportunity to participate. This way to play is becoming increasingly popular where getting to a site is a problem. Schools or individual students interested in playing a Math League game on the web should e-mail problem setter Bruce Shawyer at bshawyer@math.mun.ca. Effective September 2002, web-games are available to any school grouping in Canada.



"E-mail from my teacher. She says turn off the computer and do your homework."

The same game usually takes place simultaneously on Saturday mornings at each locale, with district schools competing against each other. Game dates are tentatively set as follows: Game #1 – October 26; Game #2 – November 30; Game #3 – February 22; and Game #4 March 22. Game dates in your district may vary slightly so please consult your district Program Specialist or Math League contact.

A Provincial Championship Game (Game #5 of each season) takes place towards the end of a school year (usually in late April or early May), with the top school(s) from each district competing at a common site (usually a host school under the NLTA Math/Science Special Interest Council). The tentative date for the Provincial Final is May 3, 2003.

Games are currently developed by problem setters Peter Booth and Bruce Shawyer (Memorial University), and John Grant Mcloughlin (University of New Brunswick), and are distributed across the province by provincial coordinator Paul Gosse to Board Program Specialists who act as local coordinators.

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics supports a Junior High Math Challenge and other outreach programs. For more information about the NLTA Senior Mathematics League (and outreach programs of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics), please visit www.math.mun.ca/ and click "Outreach", or e-mail provincial coordinator Paul Gosse at pgosse@stemnet.nf.ca

Thompson Fellow says "thanks" for rewarding experience

Denniston Douglas, Second Vice President of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers' Union (SVGTU) recently visited teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador as a participant in the John M. Thompson Fellowship Program. The Program, which is sponsored by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), provides regional training for the leadership of national teachers' organizations. Along with partners from the international education community, and carefully chosen resource people, CTF provides tailor-made programming in key development areas. His study tour, hosted by the NLTA, was preceeded by a two-day orientation at the Canadian Teachers' Federation in Ottawa.

"I am pleased to have had the opportunity as a Visiting John Thompson Fellow to work with the professional staff of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association," said Mr. Douglas. "It was two of the most challenging but enjoyable weeks of my life, especially in the historic launching of the Professional Development Alliance in the province."

The program was designed to provide Mr. Douglas with a deeper understanding of professional development issues in Newfoundland and Labrador and allowed him to share experiences and learn from the experience of professionals in the province. This was done through active participation in seminars and workshops, meetings with staff from NLSBA, Memorial University, Department of Education, school visits and job shadowing of staff at the NLTA office.

NLTA Executive Director, Edward Hancock, accepts a thank you gift from Denniston Douglas during his visit to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Following his experience at the NLTA, Mr. Douglas met once again with CTF International Programs staff and was reunited with two other John Thompson Fellows who were hosted by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation. At this post-tour meeting he reported on his professional experience and stay in our province. Mr. Douglas said his visit will lead to more emphasis on professional development issues in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and improvement in the service delivery at the SVGTU. The experience has provided a new working relationship between the NLTA and the SVGTU as well as strengthening of person-to-person contact between education professionals in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Newfoundland and Labrador.

"There are many people/organizations to thank for their input in making my visit such an enjoyable one and, for fear of leaving someone out, I will not do that," said Mr. Douglas. "I would be remiss, however, if I did not single out Beverley Park and the staff of the NLTA and CTF."

Following a brief vacation in Canada, Mr. Douglas will be returning to St. Vincent to resume his duties as Second Vice President of the SVGTU as well as the Union's Industrial Relations Officer.

The 2.6% Salary Increase: What Does it Mean?

by PERRY DOWNEY

As you are all aware, during the most recent round of negotiations it was agreed by the parties to extend the 2002-03 school year and subsequent years by five additional days from 190 days to 195 days. As a result of this increase to the teachers work year, teachers' salaries were also increased by an additional 2.6%. The Benefits and Economic Services Division have received several telephone inquiries asking how and when will the additional 2.6% be paid.

As stated in Schedule C: Annual Salary Scales of the new Provincial Collective Agreement (Schedule A1 of the new Labrador West Collective Agreement): "Payment for the increase in the length of the school year from 190 to 195 days in 2002-03 shall begin with the first pay period following April 1, 2003 and shall be paid out over the remaining pay periods from April 1 to August 31, 2003."

What this means to teachers is that teachers began earning the additional 2.6% increase in salary as of September 1, 2002; however, the salary payment for the period September 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003 will not commence until April 1, 2003. As of April 1, 2003 the amount of additional salary owing to each teacher as a result of the 2.6% increase will be paid out over the remaining pay periods from April 1, 2003 to August 31, 2003. This arrangement will occur this year because Government had not budgeted for the additional cost of the extension to the school year during the fiscal year 2002-2003. When this issue became a reality during last spring's negotiations it was agreed that payment for the additional 2.6% would be delayed. Payment would commence at the beginning of the 2003-2004 fiscal year and would be paid out in its entirety during the remaining pay periods of the 2002-2003 school year.

Substitute teachers, on the other hand, who were employed in "day-to-day" substituting contracts at the "low rate" of pay, i.e., employed for less than four consecutive days for the same regular teacher, will receive the 2.6% increase effect September 1, 2002 for each day employed during the school year. As a result, the additional 2.6% will be paid to substitute teachers during each pay period throughout the school year. However, any substitute teacher who enters into a contract which would pay them at the "high rate" of pay, i.e., employed for more than three consecutive days for the same regular teacher, will receive the additional 2.6% increase, retroactively to September 1, 2002 for each day taught during the period September 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003, as would regular teachers, i.e., these substitute teachers will also be paid during the period April 1, 2003 to August 31, 2003.

During the 2002-2003 school year, all teachers in the province will receive a 2.5% salary increase effective September 1, 2002 and a second 2.5% salary increase, effective March 1, 2003. These two increases are in addition to the 2.6% increase effective September 1, 2002 covering the five additional days. During the 2003-04 school year, teachers will receive a 2.5% salary increase, effective September 1, 2003 and an additional 2.5% salary increase effective March 1, 2004. The current Collective Agreement will expire on August 31, 2004.

In preparation for a new round of collective bargaining, the Association is beginning its internal process, with additional discussions being planned for late Fall 2002 and early Winter 2003. It is anticipated that members to the Collective Bargaining Committee will be appointed during the Fall 2002.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economics Services Division.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division at the NLTA.

Teacher Salaries
A Cross-Canada Comparison

The following is a comparison of teacher salaries at the highest pay category in teacher salary scales across Canada as of June 30, 2002. The figures are the most current available and were provided to the NLTA by the Canadian Teachers' Federation. A more detailed comparison of major teacher salary scales in Canada is regularly carried out by CTF and is published in its *Economic Services Bulletin.*

Salary information contained below is based on province-wide salary scales for the four Atlantic provinces, Quebec and Saskatchewan, while Territorial agreements are shown for the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. For the remaining four provinces, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia, local collective agreements are in effect and a sample of salary scales from some of the largest urban centres is included.

Province/ Territory	Agreement	Salary Category	Minimum	Maximum	Steps	Avg. Increment Min. to Max. ($)	(%)
NL	Provincial	VII	$43,557	$60,147	11	$1,659	3.3%
PE	Provincial	CVI	$36,096	$55,960	11	$1,986	4.5%
NS[1]	Provincial[2]	TC7	$39,801	$61,261	11	$2,146	4.4%
NB	Provincial	CVI	$38,340	$58,996	11	$2,066	4.4%
QC[1]	Provincial	19	$41,001	$62,281	15	$1,520	3.0%
ON	Elementary: Ottawa-Carleton[3]	A4	$41,200	$70,091	11	$2,889	5.5%
	Toronto	A4	$41,471	$70,892	11	$2,942	5.5%
	Secondary: Ottawa-Carleton[3]	A4	$40,139	$68,605	11	$2,847	5.5%
	London Catholic	A4	$37,665	$69,233	11	$3,157	6.3%
MB[1]	Winnipeg	VI	$41,575	$62,939	10	$2,374	4.7%
SK	Provincial	VI	$38,124	$61,454	11	$2,333	4.9%
AB	Calgary	F	$42,277	$67,988	12	$2,337	4.4%
	Edmonton	6	$44,600	$67,747	11	$2,315	4.3%
BC	Vancouver	6M	$44,656	$67,006	11	$2,235	4.1%
YT	Territorial	VI	$52,654	$75,639	11	$2,299	3.7%
NT	G.N.W.T.[5]	6	$55,563	$79,392	12	$2,166	3.3%
NU	Territorial	6	$55,430	$79,202	12	$2,161	3.3%

[1] The ranking of pay categories for Quebec and Nova Scotia exclude the highest pay category requiring a doctoral degree given that most provinces do not have a similar category. As well, category VII for Winnipeg, in which there are relatively few teachers, was also excluded from that jurisdiction's ranking.

[2] The provincial collective agreement expired December 31, 2001.

[3] Minimum and maximum salaries shown apply to teachers on staff as of May 1, 2001. Effective September 1, 2001, alternative salary scales apply to teachers hired on or after May 1, 2001.

[4] The collective agreement expired on August 31, 2001.

[5] Applies to teachers outside Yellowknife. Teachers in the Yellowknife Public and Catholic Districts have separate salary scales.

The Internet and Protection of Teachers

"...remedies for false or embarrassing information, as well as personal attacks using the Internet as the medium, are subject to action under the Criminal Code of Canada."

At the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Teachers' Federation held in July in St. John's, the following resolutions concerning the Internet and protection of teachers were adopted unanimously by delegates:

11.1 That CTF provide information to teachers about existing legislative provisions in the Criminal Code of Canada, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, as well as Civil Law remedies that could apply in such cases.

11.2 That CTF communicate with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA), the Canadian Home and School Federation (CHSF), the Commission nationale des parents francophones (National Commission of Francophone Parents), and the Regroupement des conseils scolaires francophones (Francophone School Board Consortium), seeking their support for the measures endorsed by the Board of Directors.

11.3 That CTF encourage Member organizations to disseminate information and provide as much support as possible to teachers so as to discourage and prevent individuals or groups from using the Internet for the purpose of personal attacks.

The Canadian Teachers' Federation has communicated with the organizations as referenced in Resolution 11.2 and will keep members informed as replies are received.

Teachers need to be aware that depending on the nature of the incident, remedies for false or embarrassing information, as well as personal attacks using the Internet as the medium, are subject to action under the Criminal Code of Canada. Action can be taken using the provisions dealing with hate propaganda and defamatory libel.

In addition, some legal experts suggest that challenges are possible using the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, specifically the reasonable limits provision in combination with the freedom of expression clause. The applicable sections are as follows:

Guarantee of Rights and Freedoms

1. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

Fundamental Freedoms

2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms: a) freedom of conscience and religion; b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication; c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and d) freedom of association.

Civil law remedies also exist for defamation resulting from libel and slander. The following Criminal Code references could be invoked:

"298. (1) A defamatory libel is matter published, without lawful justification or excuse, that is likely to injure the reputation of any person by exposing him to hatred, contempt or ridicule, or that is designed to insult the person of or concerning whom it is published.

(2) A defamatory libel may be expressed directly or by insinuation or irony (a) in words legibly marked upon any substance; or (b) by any object signifying a defamatory libel otherwise than by words. R.S., c.C-34, s.262.

Publishing

299. A person publishes a libel when he

a) exhibits it in public; b) causes it to be read or seen; or c) shows or delivers it, or causes it to be shown or delivered, with intent that it should be read or seen by the person whom it defames or by any other person. R.S., c.C-34, s.263.

Punishment of Libel Known to be False

300. Everyone who publishes a defamatory libel that he knows is false is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years. R.S., c.C-34, s.264."

For further information on any of the information in this article please contact the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Applying for Educational Leave

Academic Year 2003-2004

The deadline for applications for educational leave (academic year 2003-2004) is **February 1, 2003**. Teachers who are interested should **apply to their school districts** in accordance with Article 20.03 of the Collective Agreement using the application contained on the following two pages. **School districts** should forward approved applications to: Mr. Gary Hatcher, Director of School Services and Professional Development, Department of Education, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6. In accordance with the Collective Agreement, the Educational Leave Committee will make its selection by March 1, 2003. Please note that only the information contained in the application will be used by the Committee in the selection process and that additional information will not be considered. The successful applicants will be notified before the end of March. Please take particular note of the eligibility requirements (20.01) and of the continuing employment commitment if your application is accepted (20.07). The corresponding article in the Labrador West Agreement is Article 32.

Educational Leave Selection Criteria: 2003-2004

General:

(1) An attempt is made to award leaves so there is no disruption among the various school districts of the province in relation to the teacher population of those districts;

(2) There is an attempt to allocate leaves to males and females in the proportion that each group is represented within the teaching force.

Specific:

- Prior paid educational leaves
- Education History: certificate level; degrees held and dates conferred; major field of study; date of last course taken.
- The educational needs of the district as recommended by the Director.
- The educational needs of the province.
- Professional involvements.
- Years of teaching experience.

The general criteria are quite clear in intent and govern the overall selection of leave recipients. The specific criteria are designed to give a more detailed profile of the applicant.

It is important to realize that the program of study which the applicant intends to pursue is one of the factors considered in deciding on the allocation of educational leaves, and when leave is granted to an individual it is granted on the basis of the information contained on the application form. **If a successful applicant finds it necessary to change his/her planned program of study from that indicated on the application, the Selection Committee will then reconsider the granting of the leave before making a final decision.** All leaves granted are awarded on that basis.

Considering the above, it is to the applicant's advantage if acceptance to the program indicated is obtained prior to applying for the educational leave. Many programs are extremely limited in the number of seats available, so applicants should be reasonably sure of acceptance before listing a particular program.

No one factor of those listed in the above criteria dominates the Committee's final decision. Each member of the Committee, after thorough discussion of all the factors and after reviewing in detail the information on each applicant, has input to the final selection. Every effort is made to apply the criterion in a consistent fashion, and some aspects of the procedure may be computer-assisted.

Policy Regarding Awarding of Educational Leaves

(1) The maximum leave to be awarded any one teacher shall be 2½ university semesters.

(2) Leave shall normally be awarded for a duration of 1 or ½ university semesters.

(3) A teacher will be eligible to receive an additional award five years after receiving an award.

(4) Notwithstanding the above, a teacher may receive additional awards if that teacher is pursuing a program of studies at the request of the Educational Leave Committee or a program of studies which the Committee has identified as one to receive priority.

(5) In any given year if the number of leaves available exceeds the number of "first-time" applicants, the additional awards will be given to applicants who have received an award previously.

Article 20 – Educational Leave

20.01 Subject to the other provisions of this Article, a teacher who has been employed in Newfoundland and Labrador as a teacher for five (5) years or more may be eligible for Educational Leave up to one (1) year.

20.02 There shall be an Educational Leave Committee consisting of five (5) members, two (2) of whom shall be appointed by the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

20.03 Teachers who are eligible for Educational Leave and who wish to obtain such leave, shall make application to the School Board. Only applications which are approved by the School Board shall be forwarded to the Educational Leave Committee.

20.04 Prior to January 1 each year, the Minister shall notify the Educational Leave Committee of the number of teachers who may be granted educational leave in the coming school year. In any event, the minimum number of teachers who may be granted leave shall be twenty-five (25) per year, or the equivalent.

20.05 The Educational Leave Committee shall, not later than the 1st day of March of the year of the award, select those teachers who are to be granted educational leave. The number selected by the Committee shall not exceed the number indicated by the Minister in accordance with clause 20.04.

20.06 Leave granted under this Article shall be at the rate of eighty per cent (80%) salary.

20.07 Upon completion of the Educational Leave, a teacher shall return to the School Board from which leave was granted, for a period of not less than double the period of leave granted.

20.08 A teacher granted Educational Leave shall, subject to Article 9, on return be given the same position or comparable position in the same school, unless it is mutually agreed between the teacher and the School Board that the teacher return to a particular position.

20.09 The period in which a teacher is on Educational Leave with pay shall be considered as full time taught.

20.10 Nothing in this Article shall be deemed to preclude leave privileges which may be available to teachers under Article 19.

Application for Educational Leave

September 2003 – August 2004

NAME: S.I.N.:

DATE OF BIRTH:

HOME ADDRESS:

PHONE: (Home) (School)

SCHOOL DISTRICT:

PRESENT TEACHING CERTIFICATE:

DEGREES/DIPLOMAS:

Degree/Diploma: Major Field of Study: Date Conferred:

Degree/Diploma: Major Field of Study: Date Conferred:

Degree/Diploma: Major Field of Study: Date Conferred:

CURRENT TEACHING ASSIGNMENT:

DATE OF LAST COURSE TAKEN:

NO. OF YEARS TEACHING:
In the Province: Elsewhere:

List dependents, giving ages:

List of other awards, scholarships, fellowships, etc., which you may receive for the period of leave:

List of professional involvements for the past three years:

DATES FOR WHICH LEAVE IS REQUESTED: (Period: September - December 2003; January - April 2004; May - June 2004)

First Choice:

Second Choice:

Educational Institution:

What program of study do you intend to pursue?

Have you been accepted for this program of studies for the semester(s) indicated? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(*If yes, please attach confirmation of acceptance from the educational institute.*)

PURPOSE FOR LEAVE:

(*Give an indication of your educational goals. Attach an additional sheet if more space is required.*)

I hereby certify that I fulfill the requirements for educational leave as outlined in Article 20.01 of the Collective Agreement and accept the obligation imposed by Article 20.07.

Date: Signature:

NOTE TO TEACHERS: please forward to your School District and from there it will be forwarded to: *Mr. Gary Hatcher, Director of School Services and Professional Development, Department of Education, Confederation Building, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6.* Application must be received by the Selection Committee by **FEBRUARY 1, 2003**.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved on behalf of School District No.

which agrees to the provision of Article 20.08 and 20.09.

School District Comments/Recommendations:

Date: Signature:
(*Chairperson or Director of Education*)

Recommended for educational leave by the Educational Leave Committee for the period of:

Program of Study:

Date: Signature:

There is a

Power

Among Us...

a power that drives our economy

that supports a growing modern society

that can advance our economic objectives.

That's...

The Power of Learning

A Message from the Teachers of Atlantic Canada

Summary Highlights

National Issues in Education Poll

"27% of Canadians surveyed in 2002 believe the highest education spending priority among eight issues polled should be reducing class sizes . . . ."

A national public opinion poll was conducted by Vector Research and Development Inc. in May 2002 for the Canadian Teachers' Federation. The questions for this poll were designed to determine public attitudes on several major education issues. The findings are based on telephone interviews conducted between May 1 to 11, 2002, with 2,265 adults, 18 years of age and over throughout Canada. The sample of phone numbers chosen was drawn by recognized probability-sampling methods to ensure that each region of the country was represented in proportion to its population.

This article highlights some of the major findings. The full summary of major findings can be reviewed in the September 2002-03 issue of the Canadian Teachers' Federation *Economic Services Bulletin*. A complete copy of the results, or parts thereof, are available to Members on request from the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

When asked what grade would you give schools in your province and your community, Canadians surveyed continue to give higher grades to schools in their community than to schools in their province. The share of respondents in Quebec and British Columbia who graded community schools A or B in 2002 was the highest or tied for highest in their respective province over the six surveys conducted since 1996. However, shares were the lowest recorded in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Ontario.

Canadians were asked to grade specific areas of the public schools through the following question: What grade... A for excellent, B, C, D, or F for fail, would you give to the following areas of the public school system in your province?

A. Training in the Use of Computers

- Continues to receive highest grade among eight surveyed areas, with shares of Canadian respondents grading this area A or B increasing steadily over three consecutive polls, from 61% in 1999 to 64% in 2000 and 68% in 2002.
- 71% of teachers surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B, including 38% who graded it A.

B. Making the Schools Safe

- 57% of Canadians surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B, ranking it second among the eight areas surveyed, up from 54% in 2000 and 52% in 1999, when it ranked third.
- 6 in 10 teachers surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B, including 23% who graded it A.

C. Giving Children a Good Quality Education

- A majority (56%) of Canadians surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B in 2002, up from 55% in 2000 and 54% in 1999.
- 69% of teachers surveyed graded this area A or B in 2002 compared to 38% of supervisors and managers surveyed.

D. Preparing Students for Post-Secondary Schools and Universities

- 55% of Canadians surveyed graded this area A or B in 2002, up from 48% in 2000 and 47% in 1999.
- About three-quarters of teachers surveyed graded this area A or B in 2002 compared to 4 in 10 supervisors and managers surveyed.

E. Evaluating Student Progress and Communicating the Results to Parents

- 54% of Canadians surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B, up from 46% in 2000 and 1999.
- 67% of teachers surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B, compared to 44% of supervisors and managers surveyed.

F. Preparing Students for Life and to Assure the Responsibilities of Good Citizenship

- 46% of Canadians surveyed graded this area A or B in 2002, up from 38% in 2000 and 37% in 1999.
- 54% of teachers surveyed in 2002 gave a grade of A or B to this issue in 2002 compared to 36% of supervisors and managers and self-employed respondents surveyed.

G. Preparing Children for the Future Workforce

- 45% of Canadians surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B, up from 39% in 2000 and 38% in 1999.
- 51% of teachers surveyed in 2002 graded this area A or B compared to 38% of supervisors and managers surveyed, and 58% of adult students surveyed.

H. Maintaining Discipline in the Classrooms

- Continues to receive the lowest grade among eight surveyed areas, with 42% of Canadian respondents grading this area A or B in 2002, up from 38% in 2000 and 36% in 1999.
- 64% of teachers surveyed graded this area A or B in 2002, compared to 24% of supervisors and managers surveyed.

Canadians were asked about their level of support for increased public education funding through the following question: How do you feel about the level of government funding of the public education system in your province? Would you favour or oppose increased funding for the elementary schools and the high schools?

- 8 in 10 Canadians surveyed in 2002 support increased funding at both the elementary and secondary levels.
- Support for increased education funding in 2002 was the second highest recorded among nine Vector and Gallup Poll surveys conducted since 1986.
- 9 in 10 teachers surveyed support more funding for high schools in 2002 and 86% are in favour of increased elementary school funding.
- Support for increased funding in 2002 was highest in Newfoundland and Labrador and lowest in Manitoba for both the elementary and secondary levels, ranging from 94% to 71% and from 96% to 73% for each respective level.

Canadians were asked their views on education spending priorities through the following question: If more money were spent on the public education system, which one of these would you improve first or give the highest priority? Reducing class sizes, teacher training and upgrading, more computers in the classrooms, improving safety and security in the schools, building more schools, province-wide student achievement tests, testing teachers' qualifications, or improving the curriculum.

- 27% of Canadians surveyed in 2002 believe the highest education spending priority among eight issues polled should be reducing class sizes, although the proportion of respondents expressing this view is down from a high of 37% in 2000.
- Improving the curricula was ranked second among eight issues surveyed in 2002, with 21% of Canadians surveyed reporting this issue as the highest education spending priority.
- Teacher training and upgrading was ranked third among the eight issues surveyed in 2002 with 15% of Canadians surveyed reporting this issue as the highest education spending priority, down from 26% in 2000 and 31% in 1995.
- 14% of Canadians surveyed in 2002 consider testing teachers' qualifications to be the highest spending priority, ranking it fourth among the eight issues surveyed.
- 8% of Canadians gave improving safety and security in the schools the highest priority, ranking it fifth among the eight issues surveyed, down from 15% in 1997.
- 5% ranked more computers in the classrooms sixth among the eight areas surveyed. The 5% share in 2002 is down from 16% in 1997 and is the lowest among the five surveys conducted since 1995.
- 4% of Canadians believe that province-wide student achievement tests are the highest education spending priority, ranking seventh among the eight issues surveyed.
- Only 3% of Canadians feel that building more schools is the highest spending priority, ranking it last among the eight issues surveyed, down from 6% in 2000.

Canadians favour teacher evaluations 2 to 1 over standardized tests to measure student achievement and school performance. Respondents were asked: In your opinion, which of the following is the BEST way to measure a student's achievement in school and how well the school is doing educating students? By standardized tests or teacher evaluations of their student's work, including tests, homework and other assigned projects?

- 57% of Canadians surveyed favour teacher evaluations of their student's work, including tests, homework and other assigned projects to measure student achievement and school performance.
- Only 27% surveyed favour standardized tests, while 14% report having no preference between standardized tests and teacher evaluation, indicating they are "both the same".
- 69% of teachers surveyed prefer teacher evaluations while only 15% feel that standardized tests are better. In comparison, 38% of supervisors and managers surveyed favour teacher evaluations while 40% support standardized tests.

Other questions on the survey included such topics as the importance of various benchmarks in evaluating public schools and views on what would improve the quality of teaching. These results will be summarized in a future issue of *The Bulletin*.

2002-04 School Board-Teacher Liaison Committees

The following are the NLTA representatives on the 2002-04 School Board-Teacher Liaison Committees. These two-year committees are established in accordance with Article 5 of the new Collective Agreement (Article 16 in Labrador West) to provide the opportunity for teachers to discuss with representatives of their employer, local issues such as board policies, physical conditions of the school, curriculum issues, and holiday schedules, that impact on their work life yet are not grievable items under the Collective Agreement. Your Association sees these Committees as being valuable avenues for dealing with employer/employee issues at the local district level. **(C) = Chairperson**

District #1 - Labrador

Faith Shuglo (C), *Nutak Labradorimi*
GD, Hopedale A0P 1G0
933-3814 (s); 933-3836 (h); 933-3805 (f)
Dave Gatehouse, *Coastal Labrador South*
PO Box 7, Cartwright A0K 1V0
938-7291 (s); 938-7268 (h); 938-7467 (f)
dgatehou@stemnet.nf.ca
Stephen MacDonald, *Lake Melville*
PO Box 474, Stn C
Happy Valley-Goose Bay A0P 1C0
896-5315 (s); 896-0875 (h); 896-4885 (f)
s.macdona@nf.sympatico.ca

District #1 - Labrador West area

Darryn Cramm (C)
PO Box 633, Wabush A0R 1B0
944-7731 (s); 282-3378 (h); 944-3105 (f)
dcramm@stemnet.nf.ca
(*Two other representatives to be named*)

District #2 - Northern Peninsula/ Labrador South

Tom O'Reilly (C), *Aurora*
PO Box 571, St. Anthony A0K 4S0
454-8324/5 (s); 454-4123 (h); 454-0003 (f)
tgorielly@nf.sympatico.ca
Rudy Porter, *Bremco*
PO Box 206, Englee A0K 2J0
866-2770 (s); 866-2779 (h); 866-2120 (f)
rporter21@hotmail.com
Paul May, *Ingornachoix*
PO Box 161, Flower's Cove A0K 2N0
861-3624/5 (s); 456-2076 (h); 861-3206 (f)
paulmay21@hotmail.com
Brian Bartlett, *Belle Mer*
GD, Black Duck Cove A0K 1M0
247-2008 (s); 877-2495 (h); 247-2207 (f)
brian.bartlett@nf.sympatico.ca

District #3 - Corner Brook/Deer Lake/ St. Barbe

Gary Wilcott, *Deer Lake*
24 Walsh's Ave, Pasadena A0L 1K0
686-5091 (s); 686-5309 (h); 686-5654 (f)
gwilcott@stemnet.nf.ca
Wayne Park, *Table Mountain*
PO Box 138, Woody Point A0K 1P0
453-2206 (s); 453-7211 (h); 453-2460 (f)
wgpark@stemnet.nf.ca
Bill Chaisson (C), *Humber*
9 Stonehenge Pl, Corner Brook A2H 3B4
634-5258 (s); 634-5415 (h); 634-5413 (f)
bgchaisson@yahoo.com
Janice House, *Taylor's Brook*
PO Box 135, Jackson's Arm A0K 3H0
482-2422 (s); 459-3154 (h); 482-2129 (f)
randyhou@hotmail.com
(*One other representative to be named*)

District #4 - Stephenville/Port aux Basques

Paul Pinsent, *Appalachia*
6 Delaware Dr, Stephenville A2N 2X1
643-9672 (s); 643-6734 (h); 643-5044 (f)
wpinsent@nf.sympatico.ca
Ruth Tucker, *Burgeo*
PO Box 66, Burgeo A0M 1A0
886-2543 (s); 886-2786 (h); 886-2161 (f)
rutucker@stemnet.nf.ca
Don Payne (C), *Port aux Basques*
PO Box 1341, Port aux Basques A0N 1K0
695-3551 (s); 695-2407 (h); 695-9704 (f)
dpayne@stemnet.nf.ca
Leo Freeborn, *Rameaux*
PO Box 297, Ramea A0M 1N0
625-2283 (s); 625-2492 (h); 625-2151 (f)
lfreebor@stemnet.nf.ca

District #5 - Baie Verte/ Central/Connaigre

Sean Tibbo, *Baie Verte Peninsula*
PO Box 144, LaScie A0K 3M0
675-2510 (s); 675-2156 (h); 675-2063 (f)
stibbo@stemnet.nf.ca
Allan Spencer (C), *Belleoram-Wreck Cove*
PO Box 70, English Hr. West A0H 1M0
888-3426 (s); 888-6231 (h); 888-3428 (f)
aspencer@stemnet.nf.ca
Tom Kendell, *Exploits Valley*
75 Southcott Dr,
Grand Falls-Windsor A2A 2P2
489-5796 (s); 489-2929 (h); 489-1233 (f)
tkendell@nf.sympatico.ca
Harvey Rice, *Green Bay*
1 Earle's Drive, Springdale A0J 1T0
673-3775 (s); 673-4128 (h); 673-2181 (f)
hrice@stemnet.nf.ca

District #6 - Lewisporte/Gander

Emily Clarke, *Fogo Island*
PO Box 336, Fogo A0G 2B0
266-2560 (s); 266-1109 (h); 266-2384 (f)
lily1654@hotmail.com
Wayne Hurley, *Ganova*
PO Box 256, Gander A1V 1W6
256-2581 (s); 651-2722 (h); 651-2986 (f)
wayne1952@hotmail.com
André Richard (C), *Hamilton Sound*
5 Grandy Ave, Gander A1V 1B3
534-2840/2768 (s); 256-8488 (h); 534-2076 (f)
Jim Small, *Notre Dame*
PO Box 460, Twillingate A0G 4M0
884-5931 (s); 884-5141(h); 884-5281 (f)
nfld155@hotmail.com

District #7 - Burin Peninsula

Lily Cole (C), *Burin-Marystown*
PO Box 134, Creston South A0E 1K0
891-1310 (s); 279-1839 (h); 891-2422 (f)
kenr.penney@nf.sympatico.ca
Frank Crews, *Granforline*
PO Box 813, Grand Bank A0E 1W0
832-2990 (s); 832-2866 (h); 832-0003 (f)
fcrews@canada.com
Jackie Maloney, *Rushoon-Terrenceville*
PO Box 1530, Marystown A0E 2M0
443-2293 (s); 279-4063 (h); 443-2323 (f)
jmaloney@stemnet.nf.ca

District #8 - Vista

Paula Smith, *Landfall Branch*
PO Box 966, Bonavista A0C 1B0
469-2263 (s); 468-7173 (h); 469-2515 (f)
pgsmith@stemnet.nf.ca
Wayne Dawe (C), *Clarenbridge*
PO Box 28, Lethbridge A0C 1V0
467-2717 (s); 467-2250 (h); 467-2152 (f)
wdawe@stemnet.nf.ca
J. Wayne Pond , *Trinity, T. Bay*
PO Box 131, Port Rexton A0C 2H0
464-3501 (s); 464-3438 (h); 464-3243 (f)
waynepond@hotmail.com

District #9 - Avalon West

Fred Driscoll, *LTS/Bay de Verde*
PO Box 206, Heart's Content A0B 1Z0
583-2810 (s); 749-7504 (h); 583-2818 (f)
Carmelita Traverse (C), *Placentia*
PO Box 45, Jerseyside A0B 2G0
227-2911 (s); 227-3647 (h); 227-3154 (f)
c.traverse@nf.sympatico.ca
Margaret Dunphy, *Conception Bay Centre*
Woodford's Post Office, Holyrood A0A 4L0
229-3381 (s); 229-4326 (h); 229-4435 (f)
mdunphy@awsb.ca
Clarence Mercer, *Bay Roberts*
PO Box 415, Shearstown A0A 3V0
786-0280 (s); 786-4103 (h); 786-1243 (f)
cwmercer@stemnet.nf.ca

District #10 - Avalon East

Kerry Martin, *Bell Island*
PO Box 792, Bell Island A0A 4H0
488-2871 (s); 488-2204 (h); 488-9373 (f)
kemartin@stemnet.nf.ca
Marilyn Bennett (C), *St. John's Centre*
18 Glasgow Place, St. John's A1B 2B4
579-9071 (s); 753-9192 (h); 579-0090 (f)
mgbennett@roadrunner.nf.net
Dolly Oldford, *Conception Bay South*
34 Olympic Drive, Mount Pearl A1N 4Y8
782-3000/0943 (s); 745-6937 (h); 782-0763 (f)
doldford@stemnet.nf.ca
Art Callahan, *Waterford Valley*
145 Hamilton Ave, St. John's A1E 2J2
745-9731 (s); 579-1000 (h); 745-0607 (f)

District # 11 - Conseil Scolaire Francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador
(Three other representatives to be named)

Protect Your Hearing

by LEON A. MILLS

"School noise is... an invisible threat to your hearing and your health. Its effects can be minimized if you follow some simple steps."

Our ability to hear and to interpret sounds clearly and accurately is a source of deep and varied pleasure. The sounds of nature, music, the voices of friends and loved ones – these are a part of the pleasures of living. Hearing, an important sense that is often taken for granted, is a principal tool for communicating with others – the expression of emotions, thoughts and ideas. However, most of us spend very little time, if any, thinking about our sense of hearing and the vital role it plays in our interactions and connectedness with students, fellow teachers, friends and family. Many of you may have heard of well-known author, Helen Keller, who has been an inspiration to many. She said that her blindness cut her off from things but that her hearing loss cut her off from people. How true!

Sounds of Discomfort...

While our sense of hearing can bring us great pleasure, it can also bring us lots of discomfort... and be downright annoying and painful. Imagine how that gym teacher feels with 30+ children screaming at the tops of their lungs? Fun for them, not for the teacher.

It's a Noisy World...

Do you wish you could avoid recess, gym, music?
Do you often have headaches at the end of the day?
Do you ever experience a sense of anxiety or tension?
Do you find you get more irritable as the day goes on?
Does your blood pressure go up when at school?
Do you wish you could reduce the noise at school?
Do you ever tell your students to – BE QUIET?
Do you ever hear strange "noises", but others don't?
Do you savor the quiet at the end of the school day?

Always on Call?

Did you know that your sense of hearing is always on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year? It never rests; it is always working to help us communicate with others, hear everyday sounds, to warn us when we sleep of dangers from fire and to hear our child's late night cries for comfort. If you have normal hearing, you probably spend half of your waking time just listening! However, it is not until our hearing is lost or significantly reduced that we begin to appreciate how important hearing is to all aspects of our lives.

Teachers and Hearing...

Hearing is essential to speech and language development. As children, we learn to speak and to acquire the symbols of language through our sense of hearing. As adults, we use our ears as a monitoring device to help us regulate the quality and volume of our voice. If we lose our hearing, there is usually some decline in our ability to speak clearly as well. All of these are important issues, but they are of particular relevance for teachers. (As I am a former physical education teacher who left the profession due to hearing loss, I also speak from experience.)

If your ability to hear and communicate is lost or seriously impaired, then your teaching career may also be lost or impaired. There is some comfort in knowing that you have an insurance plan; however, in recent years, insurance companies appear to be setting stringent standards before they accept anyone for long-term disability. Thus, after the two-year short-term disability safety net is gone, your financial future may be gone as well.

Steps to Protect Your Hearing...

The best advice that I can give is to encourage you to take steps to protect your hearing. While it is not possible to reduce all the noise that surrounds you at school, you can take steps to minimize the amount of noise your hearing is exposed to. In the process, you will reduce or eliminate the threats to your hearing, your health and your sanity.

If noise at school is a concern for you...

Discuss the issue with other teachers.
Discuss the issue with your principal.
Have your hearing checked annually.
Start a noise awareness campaign at school.
Have a "BE QUIET DAY"!
Wear customized earplugs to reduce noise
Call CHHA-NC for presentations (753-3224).

How Loud is Too Loud?
Sounds are measured in decibels (dB). See the chart below to find out how loud sounds are.

Decibel Levels of Common Sounds

(Courtesy of CHHA – Working with Hearing Loss: A Guide for Employees, Employers, and Entrepreneurs)

dB	Source	Effect on Hearing
10	normal breathing	just audible
30	whisper	very quiet
60	normal conversation	comfortable
70	hair dryer	interferes with phone conversation
85	electric razor	level at which hearing damage begins
90	pneumatic drill	danger level
100	walkman above halfway	very dangerous
110	music concert	risks permanent damage after 1 minute
115	chainsaw	extremely loud

Want Some Help?
If you would like to know more about noise and hearing loss, contact the Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-563-3599 or 726-3223. Ask for Claudette Coombs (ext. 242) or Marie Wall (ext. 265), or contact the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association – Newfoundland Chapter (CHHA-NC), Suite 103, 136 Crosbie Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 3K3. Tel: 709-753-3224, e-mail: chhanc@nfld.net.

Leon Mills is Executive Director of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association – Newfoundland Chapter.

Project Overseas 2002

My Malawian Memories

by ANN MARIE SINGLETON

This summer I experienced some of the most rewarding teaching moments of my 18-year career. As a Project Overseas participant I spent four weeks in Malawi, Africa. I would like to tell you about this great program and share some of my Malawian memories with you.

I applied to the NLTA for Project Overseas in October 2001 and was thrilled to learn, in late November, that my name would be forwarded to the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) as the Newfoundland delegate for the 2002 Project Overseas.

"Here I was in an overcrowded, dingy classroom with inadequate and broken furniture, poor lighting, and few resources, yet I was experiencing some of the brightest moments of my teaching career."

Project Overseas is a volunteer assistance program in which Canadian teachers donate their time and expertise to teach academic and professional upgrading courses to teachers in developing countries. The Canadian Teachers' Federation, in conjunction with the Canadian International Development Association (CIDA), has been operating this humanitarian program since 1962. Each summer about 50 Canadian teachers travel to approximately 12 countries to assist teachers in upgrading their qualifications. There has been and continues to be, a great "ripple effect" from these summer programs. Consider that about 2,000 Canadian teachers have assisted more than 60,000 teachers in developing countries and they in turn have each interacted with hundreds of students on a daily basis! The continued sponsorship of this program by CTF and the provincial teachers' organizations reflects their belief in this worthwhile cause.

Toward the end of February I learned that I would be going to Malawi, a geographically small, but densely populated (approximately 10 million) landlocked country in South Eastern Africa. Through the Internet, former participants, and information provided by CTF, I quickly learned about Malawi. While the available statistics, and media coverage of an impending famine, painted a rather dismal picture of a poor and struggling nation, I would soon come to realize that while the numbers don't lie, they provide a cold and detached overview of a country that is warm, vibrant and full of hope for the future.

As the winter of 2002 progressed, I acquired all necessary vaccinations and gradually became acquainted with my seven other team members via e-mails and telephone calls. We were a diverse group, coming from all over Canada, ranging in age from early 30s to mid 50s, with a wide variety of teaching and travel experiences among us. We finally met at our orientation sessions in Ottawa in early July. These meetings were mainly focused on team building but were also very informative as many questions about living and working in a foreign culture were answered.

Following class, students gather around Ann Marie in the court yard seeking extra help and practice.

A week later we flew via Amsterdam to Johannesburg and onto Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi. We were warmly welcomed at the airport by officials of the Teachers' Union of Malawi (TUM) and later we were also graciously received by the operators of our guesthouse. It was clear that we would be living quite

luxuriously compared to the average Malawian teacher. Our arrival was officially celebrated the next evening with a formal reception and dinner with the TUM executive and Department of Education officials. Quite a fuss was made over us and it was obvious from the start why Malawi is known as "the warm heart of Africa!"

More than 700 teachers attended this three-week inservice that offered upgrading courses to the current teaching force. They came from all over Malawi, arriving in overcrowded vans and buses, many with new babies in slings on their backs and accompanied by other, still small children, to care for the babies during class time. With what little belongings they brought balanced in a bundle on top of their heads, they settled in at the makeshift school residence. The prohibitive cost of furthering their education made this summer's program one of the few opportunities these teachers would have to improve their training. While attending these sessions during their winter break was not easy for them, their presence spoke volumes about their dedication to the teaching profession and their desire for self-improvement.

Prior to our actual teaching we were given the opportunity to visit several schools both in urban and rural settings. The reality of high student enrollments and few teachers was obvious at all sites. When we arrived at the first school, we were enthusiastically greeted by more than 1,000 bright-eyed children chanting "Welcome, Welcome, Welcome!" They entertained us with songs and dances and positively beamed when pictures were taken. I still marvel at their upbeat, positive attitudes when I think of the circumstances in which they live and learn on a daily basis. Their classrooms had no furniture, few textbooks and bare, paint deprived walls. However, the enthusiasm and motivation of these students could not go unnoticed. They listened respectfully to their teachers and were very careful with their limited school supplies. Although there were only 25 teachers at this school, discipline did not appear to be a problem.

Before the start of classes we also spent a day getting acquainted with our Malawian co-tutors with whom we would be sharing the teaching workload. These 15 experienced secondary school teachers were quite knowledgeable in their subject areas and played a big role in helping us adjust to our new environment. We learned a lot from each other as we discussed the curriculum and prepared lesson plans. The tone in our staff room was similar to that in any of our Canadian staff rooms. Jokes were told, pictures taken, and there were many lively discussions about the teaching profession in our respective countries. We soon realized that despite our cultural differences we have many of the same concerns in our professional lives. These teachers are joining their union in increasing numbers and we frequently witnessed signs of growing solidarity. At several gatherings loud chants of "Union - Yes! Union - Yes! Union - Yes! Solidarity forever and ever!" could be heard. Despite their current circumstances these teachers seem to have great optimism for their future.

Once the sessions started, a demanding schedule was followed for three weeks. Classes began at 7:30 a.m. and finished at 6:00 p.m. Even with morning and afternoon "tea breaks" and hearty lunches of "nsima," this was a long day! All classes were well attended, often with more than 50 students per class. Together with our Malawian co-tutors, we taught their curriculum in Mathematics, Biology, Literature, Geography, History, Home Economics, and Bible Studies. I was responsible for the Algebra component of the Math curriculum, while my two Malawian colleagues covered the Geometry, Trigonometry, and Arithmetic components.

Ann Marie works with co-tutors Mary Chinyana and Arthur Kalima.

My classes truly inspired me! As a math teacher I have never witnessed students with such a sincere desire to learn. I could not teach enough for these "model" students. My classes were usually quite crowded with some students leaning against a wall for an entire hour long lesson. Their determination to learn and their desire to improve themselves was ever present. Most could not afford the textbook, but were sure to copy all notes and homework questions from the board. They would often follow me after class seeking extra practice to help perfect a newly acquired concept. Their eagerness to learn was so refreshing. They made me feel thankful that I was a teacher! I felt immediate satisfaction in what I was doing. I couldn't help but think of the often frustrating nature of an average teaching day in Canada. (You know, that feeling that you are forcing your students to learn against their will!) Here I was in an overcrowded, dingy classroom with inadequate and broken furniture, poor lighting, and few resources, yet I was experiencing some of the brightest moments of my teaching career!

(continued on page 26)

"This prohibitive cost of furthering their education made this summer's program one of the few opportunities these teachers would have to improve their training."

These students were thirsty for knowledge and were truly appreciative of what we were doing for them. I'll never forget the excitement they showed when I taught them the slope-y-intercept method for graphing a straight line. Having only known the tedious table of values approach, they were thrilled with this new piece of knowledge. Toward the end of class I often gave little rewards such as a pencil, a ruler, or a small solar calculator (250 of them, thanks to Wayne Russell and Johnsons Insurance). All were received with unabashed joy. Basic school supplies are scarce as there are other priorities for their limited funds. Most of these teachers had never owned a calculator and while their mental math skills are amazing, this small bit of technology would make their daily school life a little less of a struggle. Paper was also at a premium and every small piece was valued. After watching some of my students squeeze three lines of writing on one line of exercise paper, it is very difficult to tolerate our wasteful ways. As a follow-up to my project I hope to involve some of our global issues classes in the collection of school supplies to forward to several headmasters of schools we visited.

Along with our teaching duties we also conducted workshops on Gender Equity and HIV-Aids. Both were scheduled after a full day of classes but were still well attended. The differences between our cultures evoked some lively discussion during the Gender Equity workshop. While Malawian culture is slowly changing as more women are educated and pursue careers, they still had a difficult time understanding why three of the four women on our team were not married with several children each. The fact that a single female could be independent and support herself is still a foreign notion to them; however, some young ladies in the audience seemed quite interested in the idea.

Ann Marie takes a stroll with some of the local villagers.

The HIV-Aids workshop had a more somber tone as Malawi is a country that is being ravaged by this disease. We stressed the need for teachers to take an active role in educating their students and their communities about HIV-Aids. While the majority of our audience agreed, it was clear that some were skeptical about our "facts." There is a definite need for more, culturally sensitive, Aids awareness education throughout Malawi and most all of sub-Saharan Africa.

We spent our weekends as tourists exploring the Malawian countryside. At the many markets selling beautifully intricate wood carvings, we haggled over prices with good-natured vendors; we discovered "bondilos" or "bottle stores" where the locals would gather to socialize in the evening; and once, when our van broke down, we were welcomed at a rural village. We also visited Lake Malawi, the country's vacation hot spot and we enjoyed the ultimate African experience – the safari. The wildlife in Africa is majestic and can be quite daunting at times. One night we slept in cottages near a lake that was home to a family of hippos and we had a herd of wild elephants stroll by our door. These were unforgettable experiences which pictures can only partially convey to others.

I have many fond memories of Malawi and of the wonderful people I met there. While this experience has opened my eyes to the reality of life in a developing country, I have not been left with a negative view. I feel the same sense of optimism that I witnessed in my students this summer. The desire and motivation to improve are strong in the Malawian people and this combined with their inherent goodwill can only reap positive results. I feel that as global citizens we each have a responsibility to become aware of the plight of countries like Malawi. As educators we must take some responsibility for increasing global awareness among our students.

In closing, I extend a sincere thank you to the NLTA and CTF for allowing me this wonderful opportunity. It was fantastic! I strongly recommend Project Overseas as a prescription for re-energizing your zest for teaching. It has truly been one of the most rewarding and satisfying experiences of my teaching career. Also, a heartfelt thanks to my colleagues at O'Donel High School for their support and enthusiasm toward my summer project. To anyone who would like to know more about this great program or specifically about my Malawi experience, please feel free to contact me at asingleton@odonel.k12.nf.ca.

Ann Marie Singleton is a high school Mathematics teacher at O'Donel High School in Mount Pearl.

RESOURCES

UNDERSTANDING TOURETTE SYNDROME: A HANDBOOK FOR EDUCATORS

Comprehensive and clearly written, an essential handbook for teachers, parents and those who play an integral role in the education of people with Tourette Syndrome and its associated disorders.

Divided into three distinct sections, this 80+ page handbook includes: current overviews of Tourette Syndrome; Attention Deficit Disorder; Obsessive Compulsive Disorder; strategies that educators can use in the classroom; and a discussion of the role of the interdisciplinary team.

This handbook also includes a very user-friendly "quick reference" and appendices that provide a helpful checklist to use in identifying behaviors observed either at home or at school.

Copies of *Understanding Tourette Syndrome: A Handbook for Educators* are available at a cost of $10.50 (TSFC member rate) or $14.00 (non-member rate) plus $2.25 per book (shipping and handling) from Tourette Syndrome Foundation, Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter, P.O. Box 722, St. John's, NL, A1C 5L4, Tel: 709-745-8732, Fax: 709-745-5993, e-mail: tourette_nf@hotmail.com.

TV&ME FREE WORKSHOPS

The *TV&ME* program is a Canadian program written and delivered by a Canadian educator and endorsed by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, the Canadian Association of Principals and the Canadian Home and School Federation. It is an innovative media literacy and healthy life coping skills program created by Concerned Children's Advertisers in partnership with Corus Entertainment Inc.

Comprehensive, free keynote and plenaries are provided to educators (K-9) and parents across Canada dealing with media literacy, bullying, active living, self-esteem and substance abuse. As well, free lesson plans are provided for all attendees at the workshops that address current provincial learning outcomes.

For more information on *TV&Me*, contact Linda Millar, Director of Education, Concerned Children's Advertisers, 2300 Yonge Street, Suite 804, Box 2432, Toronto, ON, M4P 1E4, Tel: 416-484-0871; Fax: 416-484-6564; e-mail: info@cca-kids.ca; web: www.cca-kids.ca.

GENERATION-E: A NEW BRAND OF ENGINEER

High school science teachers can now meet their learning objectives with the help of a free, interactive educational resource designed to encourage their students to consider a career in engineering.

Generation-E: A New Brand of Engineer features teaching and guidance materials for Grades 9 to 12, designed to meet the standards of the Pan-Canadian Science Curriculum and the science curricula of each province and territory.

The result of two years of effort on the part of engineers, teachers, students, guidance counselors, engineers and career professionals, the *Generation-E* campaign encourages students to understand the link between items they see around them everyday and the talent of Canadian engineers, and to then consider becoming an engineer themselves.

The *Generation-E* program consists of three main components: a teacher's kit featuring four hands-on projects linking science and engineering and meeting the curriculum objectives in each province and territory. The kit contains: a guidance counsellor kit to help them give students information about the variety and nature of engineering careers; and an internet site featuring on-line training for teachers and guidance counsellors, but also a section just for students with a comprehensive range of interactive tools and resources about the fascinating world of engineering.

To order the program, visit the *Generation-E* web site at www.generation-e.ca or e-mail: info@generation-e.ca.

NLTA

HATS OFF!

Have you recently won an award, or know of a teacher who has been recognized for their contribution to the education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador?

If so, we'd like to hear from you. Please send information on the award as well as a profile of the award winner to:

Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor,
The Bulletin
NLTA
3 Kenmount Road
St. John's, NL
A1B 1W1
Fax: 709-726 -4302
E-mail: labrowne@nlta.nf.ca

If possible, please include a photo of the award winner. All photos will be returned.

"A SIGH AND A WISH, SPIRIT AND SONG" WORKSHOP
January 30-31, 2003
Dartmouth, NS. The Kodaly Society of Nova Scotia, in cooperation with the Kodaly Society of Canada, presents "A Sigh and a Wish, Spirit and Song". This workshop for music educators, features clinicians from across Canada including Dr. Carol Beynon, co-conductor of the award winning Amabile Boys Choirs, Denise Gagne, music publisher and author of Musicplay, Jerry Kerlin, Associate Professor in the Department of Music, University of Calgary, and Director Pamela Burton of the Halifax Boys' Honour Choir. For information contact Maureen MacDougall, Tel: 902-826-1200; E-mail: macdoume@staff.ednet.ns.ca; or visit the KSC website at www.kodalysocietyofcanada.ca or the KSNS link at www.nsmea.com/ksns.html.

"THE FUN OF READING" INTERNATIONAL FORUM
June 26-29, 2003
Ottawa, ON. To strengthen mutual understanding and create opportunities for cooperation among those committed to children's literature, the conference will gather together – for the first time – all the partners whose efforts support our literature for young people: writers, illustrators, storytellers, translators, publishers, teachers, librarians, booksellers, young Canadian readers and their families, Canadian literature specialists from Canada and other countries, literacy groups, policy-makers and the media. Keynote speakers and illustrators will be announced on the conference web page at www.nlc-bnc.ca/1/7/n7-3100-e.html. For information contact Dominique Groulx, Logistics and Liaison Officer, International Forum on Canadian Children's Literature, Tel: 613-992-2483, Fax: 613-943-1939; e-mail: dominique.groulx@nlc-bnc.ca.

GEOSCIED IV: EARTH SCIENCE FOR THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY
August 10-14, 2003
Calgary, AB. The fourth international meeting for earth science teachers from elementary to university level and for earth scientists who deliver educational outreach programs through their communities, museums or science centres. The purpose is to share ideas and concepts in earth science education and in the development of programs that lead to an integrated understanding of the Earth. The innovative technical program will include keynote addresses, workshops, oral and poster sessions. Field trips will visit many world-renowned sites of interest including the Rocky Mountains, the Burgess Shale, the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology, the Frank Slide and the Athabasca Glacier. Visit www.geoscied.org for details.

IS THERE A POTENTIAL WINNER IN YOUR SCHOOL?

NLTA AWARDS

BANCROFT AWARD – In recognition of outstanding service given to NLTA at the branch level by an active member and to teachers within two years after retirement from teaching.

BARNES AWARD – In recognition of outstanding professional development services provided at the Special Interest Council level. (Nominations must come from NLTA Special Interest Councils or other professional development groups.)

ALLAN BISHOP AWARD – In recognition of outstanding service to the Association at the provincial level by an active or life member of NLTA.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD – In recognition of a major contribution made by an active member of NLTA to the cultural, social and/or community life of Newfoundland and Labrador. Consideration is given to achievements in, or contributions to: the areas of the arts (music/literature/visual arts); service to community, church and service organizations; municipal politics; etc.

Each of these four awards will be presented during the 2003 Biennial General Meeting. For further information on the criteria for these awards, details on the nomination procedure, or nomination forms, contact your branch executive. Nomination deadlines: December 31 for Allan Bishop and Special Recognition Awards; January 15 for Bancroft and Barnes Awards.

Dates to Remember

December 2002

Dec 15	Department Deadline: Teacher Exchange applications to Ontario
Dec 31	Deadline: Allan Bishop and Special Recognition Award Nominations
Dec 31	Deadline: 2003 Christmas Card Contest entries

January 2003

Jan 15	Deadline: Barnes and Bancroft Award Nominations
Jan 16	Deadline: Professional Development Fund applications
Jan 17-18	NLTA Executive Meeting
Jan 23	Deadline: Proposed changes, amendments or repeal of by-laws for BGM 2003 must be received at NLTA office by this date